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UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS-URBANA
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What You Need to Know About Disposing of Household Hazardous Waste & Pharmaceuticals

ILLINOIS
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NO DOCUMENTS

Household Hazardous Waste Information

- Household Hazardous Waste Collections Acceptable & Unacceptable Wastes
- Household Hazardous Waste Collection Facilities
- Used Paint Disposal Alternatives
- Disposal of Unwanted or Unused Pharmaceuticals

www.epa.state.il.us

Acceptable Wastes

- Oil-based paints
- Paint thinners
- Herbicides
- Insecticides
- Old gasoline
- Pool chemicals
- Cleaning products
- Mercury
- Double bagged & wetted asbestos
- Household batteries
- Used motor oil
- Drain cleaners
- Solvents
- Antifreeze
- Hobby chemicals
- Aerosol paints & pesticides
- Fluorescent lamp bulbs
- Old & outdated medicines and pharmaceuticals

Please Do Not Bring Latex Paint

Unacceptable Wastes

- Agricultural chemicals
- Business/commercial sector wastes
- Explosives
- Fireworks
- Lead acid batteries
- Medical wastes
- Propane tanks
- Smoke detectors
- Farm machinery oil
- Fire extinguishers
- Institutional wastes
- Sharps, needles, & potentially infections medical wastes

Long-Term Facilities Available for Disposal of Household Hazardous Waste.

Naperville: 1971 Brookdale Road

Fire Station No. 4

Phone: 630-420-4190

Rockford: 3333 Kishwaukee

Rock River Reclamation District

Phone: 815-967-6737

City of Chicago: 1150 N. North Branch on Goose Island

Visit the City's web site at www.cityofchicago.org or Phone: 311 or for general info: 312-744-7672.

Lake County: The Solid Waste Agency of Lake County (SWALCO) currently operates a long-term household chemical waste collection program. Information and a collection schedule can be found on the SWALCO web site, or by calling 847-336-9340.

For questions concerning the Illinois EPA's one day, or long-term collections please call the Waste Reduction Unit of the Illinois EPA at 217-785-8604 or visit www.epa.state.il.us.

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Used Paint Disposal Alternatives

Keep Painting!

This may sound simple, and it is. What better place to put the last pint or so of paint but right up there on the wall where it blends in perfectly with all the other paint you just put up there. Sure, it's a little extra work—and right when you thought you were done for the day—but you'll be rid of that extra paint for good. Simply let the can dry and then recycle or dispose of it.

Paint Something Else!

It doesn't even have to need the paint. Use an old piece of cardboard, some scrap lumber, or the inside of your garage. Just about anywhere would probably work to use up the last bit of paint. Again, let the can dry and recycle or dispose of it.

Use an Absorbent like Kitty Litter!

Kitty litter, sawdust, shredded paper or just about anything else that will absorb moisture and let the paint dry out should work here. Depending on how full the can is, you can just add the absorbent to the can and mix it up. When the liquids are absorbed, dry the mixture out or dispose of it directly. You may be able to empty the can, dry it out, and recycle it.

Give it to Someone!

Look around and you may find somebody who needs to paint a small area. Some schools or local theatres will take some small amounts of paint for scenery.

Store it for Later!

Everyone has good intentions to use half-filled cans for "touch-ups" that never come. Also, may people have saved paint that becomes unusable over time before it's called into action. If you do save your paint for later, follow some easy tips to make the paint last longer. Just cover the opening with plastic wrap, and make sure the lid fits securely so the paint doesn't leak. Then turn the paint can upside down! This creates a tight seal, and keeps the paint fresh to use again.

Disposal of Unwanted or Unused Pharmaceuticals

Don't Flush!

The age-old advice of flushing pharmaceuticals down the toilet is now considered to be the least desirable of all alternatives. For many years many households and businesses have gotten into the habit of flushing waste pharmaceuticals down the toilet or pouring them down the drain because it is low cost and appears to be the simplest way to prevent unintended use or other diversion. However, wastewater treatments plants and septic systems are generally not designed to treat pharmaceutical waste. **So don't flush your waste drugs!**

Residents are advised to save all old or unwanted medications for an Illinois EPA sponsored household hazardous waste collection. In addition, the Illinois EPA is partnering with many counties to sponsor dedicated collections for old/unwanted pharmaceuticals.

Illinois EPA Recommended Handling/ Disposal Options for Households

1. **REDUCE** pharmaceutical waste whenever possible.

- Use all antibiotics as prescribed by your doctor. Not using all doses of an antibiotic could lead to development of antibiotic resistant strains of bacteria.
- Buy only as much as can reasonably be used before the expiration date. For example, don't buy 500 aspirin just because its cheaper, unless you will use them all.
- When your doctor prescribes a new medication, ask the doctor to prescribe only enough to see if the medication will work for you and in the lowest dose advisable. That way, if the medication doesn't suit you, there is less to waste. Do the same for your pet's medications.

2. **DISPOSE** of the remainder properly.

- Whenever possible, take your unused pharmaceuticals to a pharmaceutical collection program or household hazardous waste collection event.

Pharmaceutical Disposal continued...

If a collection program does not exist in your area, encourage your health care provider, local governments and local law enforcement to develop one. **Note:** If you choose to store your waste while you wait for a pharmaceutical collection event to occur, please minimize the risk of accidental poisoning, overdose or diversion (illegal use by someone other than the intended person) by storing medication out of reach of children or in a locked cabinet.

- Dispose of your unused pharmaceuticals in the trash. Especially when there is a risk of accidental poisoning, overdose or diversion, it is better to dispose of household pharmaceuticals than to hang onto them. When placing unused pharmaceuticals in the trash, be sure to do the following:
    - Remove or mark over all labels that identify the materials as pharmaceuticals or that could provide personal information about you, including prescription information that someone could try to refill.
    - Render them unattractive to children and thieves by dissolving them in a small amount of water or alcohol, or by grinding them up and mixing them with coffee grounds or kitty litter; and
    - Put them in a second container or small plastic bag and hide them in your trash.
- Never burn pharmaceuticals or personal care products in a burn barrel. Uncontrolled burning can create dioxins and other air pollutants.

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